to the public safety. They would be recognized at once as the tokens of protection, and would have none of the sinister symbolism of a period and a traffic of which the nation is increasingly ashamed.

And if the military trophies displayed in public places are for warning to enemies, then by all means let us give attention by such display to the only foes we have to fear, the criminals who prey upon the public and evade the just penalties of their crimes. Much is said in these days of the desirability of restoring capital punishment in those states where it has been discarded as inconsistent with advancing civilization. Without waiting to determine that controversy, why not have those communities in which the death penalty is still preserved vary the device of public warning by substituting the gallows, the electric chair, and small models of the lethal chamber in the places where now the useless and obsolete guns are set? Or if the love of the antique prevail over the sentiment for contemporary methods, we might have the addition of the block and the axe, or add a touch of internationalism by the use of the guillotine. In any event, we should thus at least employ for purposes of civic art objects that have some contact with public interests, and are less gruesome and more practical than the outworn survivals of the age of war.—*The Christian Century.*

LIBRARIES AND THE PER CAPITA INTELLIGENCE

FOR our youth of America there exists today an investment of nearly $6,000,000,000 in facilities for formal education, in textbooks, in buildings, in machinery and equipment. What is the return upon this huge investment, as an index of the national culture of the American people?

A study of the available statistics shows that although the American system of formal education offers an opportunity to all, it actually produces the following results among an average group of 100 children of school age:

Thirty-six are not attending school at all.
Fifty-four are attending public elementary school.
Seven are attending public high school.
Three are in public night school, vocational school, etc.
Only two enter college or university.

Yet public school education represents the maximum organized education open to the people. It reaches but 64 per cent of the youth of America. Even this 64 per cent does not, on the average, receive a complete public school education; their average is seven and one-half years. College and university education reaches but 2 per cent.

In a democracy educated intelligence seems scarcely less necessary in the followers than in the leaders. Upon education largely depends the future of our civilization, the trend of our institutions, the kind of society, and the measure of its opportunities under which our sons and daughters and their children shall work and live.

What other means are at hand which will give to our present and future citizens an understanding of life, prepare them to function as proficient individuals, constructive producers and intelligent citizens, a task which formal education today only partly succeeds in doing?

Aside from the influences of the home, the church, business, societies, and clubs, the principal channels of education open to the American people are books, magazines, newspapers, moving pictures, and the radio.

Of these, the moving picture and the radio are largely recreational rather than educational. And although magazines and newspapers are one of our most important sources of education, they are of value chiefly to those who are already well begun on the path of education; they pre-suppose the groundwork of knowledge.

It is books which seem to hold the possibilities of widest usefulness. In them all the great aggregations of knowledge are embodied. All new learning eventually finds its way into book form. They supply knowledge in units; they tell a whole story as no other medium can. And, most important of all, books can furnish, as no other agency, the materials either for beginning an education or continuing its progress at any point.

If books could be brought within the reach of all, together with some form of advice and guidance in ordering and correlating that knowledge, a real contribution to the present problem of national education would be made. Is it a task for the American public library?

The public libraries are free to all. They possess the organization and experience for giving each individual the necessary guidance through the various fields of knowledge. They hold the essential resources of book knowledge. And the library provides a path to education which need not exclude any other activity but which may accompany it, make it more valuable.

There are, however, in the United States and Canada today nearly 50,000,000 people, according to a recent survey, without access to public libraries. To bring the library system within reach of this group, and establish library contacts to further the education of the 36 per cent of our American boys and girls now out of school, would constitute an important step toward the goal of national education.

The American Library Association, a national advisory body of 6,800 libraries throughout the country, is engaged in a program both to create library facilities for these 50,000,000 people, and to make the library a means to education for the American youth who do not or can not attend public school.

To achieve this end, the diffusion of knowledge through free books, and the organization of this knowledge through library guidance, a program of co-operation with every willing public and private agency has been begun. The Association has placed the resources of 6,800 American libraries at the disposal of State Library Boards, of Town, Village, County, and City Committees on Education, and of all other agencies engaged in furthering education.

Yet the magnitude and far-reaching importance of the work require the co-operation of all for its achievement. The American Library Association, whose headquarters are at 86 East Randolph Street, Chicago, Illinois, therefore asks the co-operation of business organizations, of churches, chambers of commerce, of school boards, of institutions and clubs, indeed of every organization or individual who desires that a broad, free, growing intelligence be spread everywhere in America.

ENGLISH NOTES

THE POETRY SOCIETY OF VIRGINIA

LORD DUNSANY has said that to fail of love for poetry is "to have no little dreams and fancies, no holy memories of golden days, to be unmoved by serene midsummer evenings or dawn over wild lands . . . it is to beat one's hands all day against the gates of fairyland and to find that they are shut and the country empty and its kings all gone hence."

It is to make dreams more golden, to help keep open the gates of the kingdom of faëry that poetry societies are founded. Thus the Poetry Society of Virginia is not by any means for poets only, nor is it even exclusively for those interested in poetry; it exists also for all who wish to *become* interested, to enlarge their vision of beauty through gaining fuller understanding and appreciation of the poetic art.

As the roll of members lengthens, the Society can increase its activities. Already in the three years of its existence it has been the means of stimulating interest in poetry